



**AMERICAN COLLEGE
OF RHEUMATOLOGY**
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Specialists in Arthritis Care & Research

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July 12, 2011

The Honorable Fred Upton
Energy & Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Henry Waxman
Energy & Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Upton and Ranking Member Waxman:

The American College of Rheumatology representing over 7,000 rheumatologists and rheumatology health professionals would like to commend the Energy & Commerce Committee for holding a scheduled hearing entitled, *IPAB: The Controversial Consequences for Medicare and Seniors*. This hearing will hopefully shed light on the harm that will occur when Congress places Medicare decisions in the hands of bureaucrats through the Independent Payment Advisory Board. We hope the hearing's testimonies will prompt Congress to repeal this problematic board.

The ACR understands concerns with the rising costs of health care. However, the IPAB is not the appropriate response to curb health care spending. The IPAB would remove congressional oversight and place responsibility in the hands of bureaucrats who do not have the clinical expertise to determine the adverse impact that proposed recommendations would have on patient care. With these concerns, the ACR strongly supports H.R. 452, the *Medicare Decisions Accountability Act of 2011*, legislation introduced by Rep. Phil Roe, MD that would repeal the IPAB. As of today, 162 House Republicans and Democrats support IPAB repeal.

The ACR appreciates your leadership and willingness to gather information regarding the IPAB. We hope that the results of the hearing will clarify that the IPAB will not appropriately accomplish the cost saving goals in the Medicare system set out by Congress. We look forward to working with both of you to ensure patient access to care is protected.

If you have any questions, please contact the ACR's Government Affairs Director, Aiken Hackett, at (404) 633-3777 or ahackett@rheumatology.org for more information.

Sincerely,

Tim Laing, MD
Chair, Government Affairs Committee
American College of Rheumatology

CC: The Honorable Joseph Pitts
The Honorable Frank Pallone